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# AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

## STUDENT REPORT

ATTITUDE SURVEY:

POLICE AND FIRE SERVICE INTEGRATION

MAJOR JAN C. HOFFMASTER 86-1140

*"insights into tomorrow"*

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**TITLE** ATTITUDE SURVEY: POLICE AND FIRE SERVICE INTEGRATION

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Submitted to the faculty in partial fulfillment of  
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<p>An Attitude Survey concerning the integration of the security police and fire protection organizations into one organization under the "public safety" concept. The author received responses from 132 people in these organizations. Surveys had been sent to the Chief, Security Police and Fire Chief. Attitude and perceptions received concerning training, manpower and other organizational impacts. Percentage tables included in report.</p>					
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## PREFACE

The information contained in this research may be utilized as a management tool for those considering the integration of United States Air Force security police and fire protection services. The combined services, known as the "public safety concept," has been utilized in many civilian communities and there is consideration among some managers that the same principles may be beneficial to the military community. The observations contained herein will provide important information to those who would evaluate the possibilities.

The author wishes to thank those members of the security police and fire protection branches who responded to the survey. Without their time and effort the research could not have been accomplished.

The author would also like to thank the members of the 3800th Air Base Wing, Security Police and Fire Protection branches for their assistance.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Jan C. Hoffmaster is presently the Chief, Security Police/Commander of the Weapon Systems Security Flight, 193d Special Operations Group, Pennsylvania Air National Guard. Major Hoffmaster has a unique blend of civilian and military law enforcement experience as a result of his 21 years as a member of the Air National Guard and his 19 years as a member of the Pennsylvania State Police.

Major Hoffmaster enlisted in the Air National Guard in the security police career field. After serving eight years in the enlisted ranks, he received his commission. He remained with the security police unit and in 1973 became the unit's commander. The unique mission of the 193 SOG allowed the Major to interact with various security units around the world.

In his civilian career as a member of the Pennsylvania State Police, the Major has had supervisory experience in both uniformed patrol and criminal investigation units. As a state certified instructor for municipal police officers, Major Hoffmaster spends a considerable amount of time providing law enforcement training to officers of various criminal justice agencies.

Major Hoffmaster has been a guest lecturer for the Department of Continuing Education at The Pennsylvania State University and at the University of Maryland. His lectures on accident investigation led to his published article, "Document with Photographs: Camera Evidence of Mishap Can Tell an Exacting Tale," in The Independent Adjuster, a quarterly publication of the National Association of Insurance Adjusters.

The Major received his undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice from The Pennsylvania State University, and is presently completing his Masters Degree in Public Administration at Auburn University. He, his wife Debra, and their son Ryan live near University Park, Pennsylvania.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Part of our College mission is distribution of the students' problem solving products to DoD sponsors and other interested agencies to enhance insight into contemporary, defense related issues. While the College has accepted this product as meeting academic requirements for graduation, the views and opinions expressed or implied are solely those of the author and should not be construed as carrying official sanction.

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REPORT NUMBER

86-1140

AUTHOR(S)

MAJOR JAN C. HOFFMASTER, USAF/ANG

TITLE

ATTITUDE SURVEY: POLICE AND FIRE SERVICE INTEGRATION

I. Purpose: The purpose of this research was to conduct further investigation into the possibility of integrating the Air Force security police and fire protection organizations into one public safety organization.

II. Problem: There is a continuing effort within the Air Force to strive for more cost-effective ways in which to operate individual organizations. The public safety concept has been used in many civilian communities as an effective and economical way to utilize the police and fire departments. The idea had been contemplated to structure the Air Force security police and fire protection organizations along the same lines as the civilian organizations.

III. Data: Using a mailed survey questionnaire, the author gathered the opinions of 132 supervisors in the security police and fire protection career fields to determine their attitudes and perceptions of the public safety concept in the United States Air Force.

IV. Conclusions: The survey measured a variety of organizational factors ranging from training and proficiency

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to equipment and dollars. The majority of those people surveyed were of the opinion that the disadvantages of an integrated system outweighed the advantages.

V. Recommendations: It is the recommendation of this author, based upon the research data contained herein, that the Air Force would not be receptive to a public safety concept system. It is the author's opinion that for the foreseeable future, the idea be tabled.

## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION

#### THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The purpose of this study is to further the existing research into the area of consolidation of some or all of the emergency services on an Air Force installation. In the context of this work, these "emergency services" will generally include the fire department (fire protection branch), security police, disaster preparedness, and ground safety. A 1983 research project completed by a student of the Air Command and Staff College indicated certain organizational changes would result in a more efficient use of manpower with an associated reduction in costs. The research question now under examination is whether or not there is sufficient support within the affected career fields to suggest that a pilot program of the consolidation concept be implemented.

The study of the research question in this paper will provide further insight into the possibility of any consolidation within the United States Air Force. Previous research has already indicated that consolidation would save money and manpower. (7:--) If the supervisors who are responsible for these organizations agree with this assessment, and agree that the program has definite merit, then the Air Force should initiate positive steps toward establishing the public safety concept at a test location.

This paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter will provide a general introduction to include a statement of the research question, background information on the public safety concept and conclusions contained in the previous research project. Chapter Two will look at the methodology, the questionnaire, the sample population and the rate of return. Chapter Three provides the results of the survey including statistical data, comments provided by the respondents and an interpretation of the data. Chapter Four contains the conclusions and recommendations.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The idea of integrating police and fire protection services into one organization is not a new concept. It is however, a controversial issue. Consolidation first took place in the United States approximately 70 years ago and initially involved small urban communities. The majority of these communities had low crime rates and only sporadic incidents of fire. As a result, two separate departments were not needed and consolidation occurred for economic reasons. The idea continued to gain popularity due to rising government costs, city expansion, rising crime rates, and an increasingly popular argument that the working hours of fire fighters were not fully used. (5:221) In some areas the consolidation system worked, in other areas it failed. Consolidation experiments were implemented in one of four forms.

The first form of consolidation is total integration of the fire and police services into a new department of Public Safety. Under this concept the officers of both career fields are blended into one career--that of the public safety officer (PSO). Under this arrangement the PSOs are assigned to patrol vehicles and generally assume the responsibilities of a police officer. In the event of a fire, they respond to the fire scene and utilize the fire fighting gear which they carry in the trunks of their patrol vehicles. They remain at the scene until the arrival of the fire engines which are manned by an adequate number of PSOs. This is the "truest" form of the public safety concept. The next form is that of partial consolidation.

Under the partial consolidation system, fire fighters and police officers retain their traditional identities and duties. But there is also a third career field of officers (usually those hired after the inception of the system) who are considered the Public Safety Officers. They handle both police and fire fighting duties but usually perform patrol functions on a day-to-day basis. They come under the supervision of the patrol unit hierarchy. When the Public Safety Officers are assigned to fire fighting duties, they temporarily fall under the command of the ranking fire fighter. The third form of the combined public safety system is that of functional consolidation.

In the department which maintains functional consolidation, all police and fire personnel maintain their separate identities. The duties and responsibilities of the police and fire personnel normally remain within their respective departments. However, on occasion officers from either organization might be assigned to perform tasks outside their usual role. For example, a police officer may be assigned to complete a home fire hazard check or help at a fire scene by reading gauges and hooking up hoses. A fireman may be assigned to accompany a police officer on patrol

during special or emergency situations. The final form of consolidation is that of nominal consolidation.

Under the nominal consolidation system each department maintains its traditional identity and role but falls under the administrative control of a director of public safety. This arrangement allows assistant directors (police and fire) to command their individual departments, but retains all emergency services within one organizational structure.

As previously indicated, it is not the intent and purpose of this research project to examine the advantages and disadvantages of the public safety concept on an Air Force installation. Rather, it is to survey the opinions and attitudes of certain personnel to obtain their insight into the matter. Those who desire further information about the public safety system, may refer to the 1983 project or the Bibliography which lists other current source documents regarding police and fire integration.

#### PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The 1983 research project entitled "The Public Safety Concept in the United State Air Force," Major Bernal F. Koehrsen, Jr., came to the following conclusion. (7:ix)

The implementation of a public safety concept will result in the elimination of 25 military and civilian manpower authorizations on an average installation. Just under a half million dollars per base per year would be saved. Yet, a 58% increase in effective police-fire-EMS (Emergency Medical Services) response forces would result. Calculated over a five-year period, just under one third of a billion dollars could be saved by implementing the program across the Air Force.

The study further indicated that in the quest to accomplish the mission requirements of the United States Air Force, there is a constant reminder of the need to maintain efficiency in the area of cost-effectiveness. The quality of life of the personnel is, in part, based on the requirements of physical safety. These requirements lie within the shared responsibilities of the emergency service organizations. Although they all have a vested interest in the safety of the base populace, the organizations do not have a cohesive unity of command. They are scattered across the organizational chart and report to a variety of commanders.

The 1983 study indicated that organizational changes should be implemented and offered some suggestions regarding the specific types of changes which would be necessary to reduce cost and maintain efficiency. However, the report did not take into

account the attitudes and opinions of those who would be affected by an organizational change. (4:--)

### ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

The suggestion of significant changes within the organizational structure can have a negative effect on its personnel. There are several instances when changes are likely to disrupt the work environment. Typically, they focus on organizational process: decision making, the distribution of power, interpersonal or intergroup transactions, and the like. (3:457) From the Chief Executive Officer to the laborer, everyone is in a state of flux while attempting to determine if their roles will be changed, minimized or eliminated. Therefore "the process of change, while possibly employing several strategies meaningfully, will be most successful if--at the diagnosis, planning, and implementation stages--it involves those who are affected by the change." (3:459)

It was this premise which prompted this research project. "Change techniques may differ, but the data requirements for problem identification, diagnosis, and evaluation are similar. That is, it is generally desirable to know how people perceive things, and what their attitudes and their values are." (3:468) There are basically three methods which can be used to gain information about perceptions, attitudes and values: attitude surveys, interviews, and working with the group or groups involved. (3:459) Considering the geographical dispersion of the groups involved in the United States Air Force, and the time constraints on the author, interviews and work sessions were impractical. The author, therefore, chose to use a survey to obtain the attitudes and perceptions of those who would be affected by a consolidation of police and fire services. This research product is based on the results of that survey.



## Chapter Two

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

#### THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The data for this study was collected utilizing an 18-item mailed survey questionnaire which had been prepared by the author. Each respondent was asked to complete the questionnaire and return the survey to the "project officer" (the author) in the return envelope provided. This 18-item survey requested demographic characteristics of the respondent such as rank, longevity of service, and career field. The majority of questions were designed to elicit the personal perceptions and opinions of the respondents on a variety of police and fire related topics. These attitude items were scored on a five point Likert scale. This scale provided the respondent the choices of agreeing, disagreeing or being undecided about a statement. It further gave them the opportunity to weight or emphasize their response by being able to "strongly agree" or "strongly disagree."

A survey polls a "sample" of a "population," therefore operational definitions were required to establish the population and the sample. For the purposes of this research, the population was defined as "those members/employees of the United States Air Force, who would be considered the ranking supervisor within fire protection and security police organizations, stationed at Air Force facilities within continental United States (CONUS)." The sample of the population was defined as "the Fire Chief and/or the Chief, Security Police within the population." The only other task was to draw a representative sample.

The author referred to Air Force Regulation 10-4, Air Force Address Directory, Chapter 17, "Geographical Listings of Installations and Units," to gather the list of the organizations which could be sampled. Since the number of police and fire organizations was a reasonable size, the author chose to sample the entire population. All listings of security police units, and civil engineering units were forwarded a copy of the questionnaire which was directed to the "Chief, Security Police," and the "Fire Chief."

The questionnaires were mailed on 12 November 1985, with a return suspense date of 15 December 1985. The rate-of-return of the questionnaires was very favorable and hinted that there was considerable interest and opinion about the subject of police/fire integration within the United States Air Force. "Depending on the type of survey, mail returns will be as low as 10 percent for a general population sample and as high as 80 percent for a well-motivated subsampling of the population. A 70 percent completion is extraordinary." (2:118) As noted in Table 2.1 below, the overall return rate in this survey was 85%. In fact, the return rate was slightly higher than this figure, but several surveys were received after the deadline and were not available at the time the statistical analysis was completed.

	Questionnaires	
	Sent	Received
Fire Protection	49x(n=76)	38x(n=58)
Security Police	<u>51 (n=80)</u>	<u>47 (n=74)</u>
TOTALS	100x(N=156)	85x(N=132)

Table 2.1 Percentage Response to Questionnaires

Table 2.2 provides the proportional rate-of-return by separate career field.

Fire Protection	76x
Security Police	93x

Table 2.2 Return Rate By Organization  
(Computed by dividing number received by number sent)

#### ANALYTIC TECHNIQUES

The data analysis will rely on two techniques. First, a frequency distribution will be used to analyze the demographic characteristics that were observed in the sample. Second, the attitude statements will be analyzed using a cross tabulation procedure. Subgroup comparison (police and fire) of responses

will be presented and converted to percentages. Percentages are based on the total number of responses received for each statement. The number of missing cases are reported, but not figured in the percentages. (For example, if a respondent failed to mark one of the statements this would be considered a missing case.)

## Chapter Three

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### INTRODUCTION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

This chapter will provide an analysis of the completed survey. All of the data were obtained using the mailed survey questionnaire. First to be presented will be an examination of specific demographic characteristics of the respondents. This will be followed by an analysis of the attitudes and perceptions which were measured in the questionnaire. The author reviews these attitudes and perceptions, provides a tabular presentation of the results, and then furnishes an interpretation of the data. The chapter will close with a summarization of additional comments which were included in many of the responses.

When initially reviewing the results of any survey, it is essential to establish if the results are valid, reliable, and reflect the information which was being sought. In order to determine the reliability and validity of the survey, the research must examine the sample and the population. The "population" in this survey was the supervisory structure of the two organizations. The "sample" was the Fire Chief and Chief, Security Police. As indicated in the previous chapter, the project received input from 38 people in the fire protection specialty and 74 people in the security police specialty. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the respondents.

The reader is reminded that there is disparity in the personnel system for civilian versus military members in the area of tenure in position. The observable difference between the two career fields, when comparing time in grade and time in position, is representative of this disparity. The purpose of Table 3.1 is to demonstrate to the reader that the source of the compiled data is representative of the population studied.

	No. respondents per rank/grade	Median time in career	Mean time in position
<b>Fire Protection</b>			
E7 - E9	8	20+ yrs	2.71 yrs
GS-9 - GS-10	5	15-20 yrs	4.38 yrs
GS-11 - GS-12	45	20+ yrs	7.43 yrs
<b>Security Police*</b>			
03 - 04	34	10-15 yrs	1.64 yrs
05 - 06	37	10-15 yrs	1.89 yrs

Table 3.1 A representation of the respondents including their rank/grade, time in career field and time in present position. \*Three security police responses did not contain this data.

### INTEGRATION OF ORGANIZATIONS

One of the most significant statements in the questionnaire was an item which queried the respondent regarding the efficiency of the present organizational system: "It would be more efficient to have those organizations which are responsible for the safety of the base population fall under one organizational command." If the responses to this statement had been an overwhelming majority in either direction (agree/disagree), it may have negated the need for further review. However, the responses were divided and the analysis of the remaining statements provided interesting information about the two career fields.

In response to this statement, 39% of the total sample agreed with the statement, 10% were undecided and 51% disagreed with the statement. The variation within the category of responses is not statistically significant, but a further breakdown as to how the statement was answered by individuals in each career field provides insight into career attitudes. This had been the first statement on the questionnaire dealing with integration in general. When the survey statements began to focus on the integration of just the fire protection and security police, the responses became more parochial.

	GRADE/RANK			
	<u>GS-11/12</u>	<u>GS-9/10</u>	<u>E7-E9</u>	<u>Total</u>
Strongly Agree	24%	20%	0	21%
Agree	18%	20%	38%	21%
Undecided	4%	0	0	3%
Disagree	11%	20%	12%	12%
Strongly Disagree	<u>43%</u>	<u>40%</u>	<u>50%</u>	<u>43%</u>
	100%	100%	100%	100%
	(n=45)	(n=5)	(n=8)	(N=58)

\*It would be more efficient to have those organizations which are responsible for the safety of the base population fall under one organizational command.

Table 3.2 Fire Protection Response to General Integration.

The respondents in the fire protection branch were more opinionated about this statement than those in the security police specialty. There were 16% undecided in the security career field as compared to 3% undecided in the fire protection career field. The security police responses were more evenly distributed over the spectrum of answers which indicates they were more receptive to general integration than the fire protection branch. Table 3.2 presents this data for the fire protection specialty and Table 3.3 presents the data for the security specialty.

Part of the reason that the fire fighters are more opinionated on this statement is the fact that several professional fire fighting organizations have openly opposed any form of integration. These organizations include the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). (5:222)

	GRADE/RANK		<u>Total</u>
	<u>05-06</u>	<u>03-04</u>	
Strongly Agree	23%	9%	16%
Agree	22%	17%	20%
Undecided	11%	20%	16%
Disagree	22%	23%	22%
Strongly Disagree	<u>22%</u>	<u>31%</u>	<u>26%</u>
	100%	100%	100%
	(n=37)	(n=35)	(N=72)
Missing data			2
<p>*It would be more efficient to have those organizations which are responsible for the safety of the base population fall under one organizational command.</p>			

Table 3.3 Security Police Response to General Integration.

### ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACTS

One statement in the survey addressed the importance of organizational resources: "The following are items which have an impact upon your present operation. Please prioritize them with #1 indicating that which is of the greatest concern." The choices of responses available were; equipment, dollars, manpower, and training. The technique used to analyze this data was a weighted score factor according to the respondent's prioritization. Four points were assigned to the highest priority choice, three points to the next choice, then two points and one point. This provided a possible total of ten points per questionnaire. As indicated in Table 3.4, "manpower" significantly outranked the other choices in level of importance by a score of approximately two times that of any of the other resources that were considered.

An interesting finding in this statement was the perceived effect of cost (dollars) on the respondent's operations. One of the basic ideas of the public safety concept is the aspect of cost savings. In fact, in the Koehrsen report "cost" was one of the factors considered relevant to the decision to implement the

public safety concept system. However, as can be seen in Table 3.4, cost was the least significant element of the supervisors' concerns regarding organizational operations.

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Score</u>
Manpower	475
Training	257
Equipment	240
Dollars	<u>216</u>
TOTAL POINTS	1188

Table 3.4     Prioritization of Organizational Resources.  
Weighted score.\*

It should be noted that part of the reason the manpower score was considerably higher than the training score was because a few of the respondents only answered the question by indicating their highest priority choice while failing to list the remaining three choices. This statement was assigned a total value of ten points per questionnaire using the weighted score method. Considering 132 questionnaires were returned there should have been a total of 1320 points. As indicated in the table, the total score was only 1188 points.

#### INTEGRATION OF POLICE AND FIRE

A proposal was offered as an alternative for those who did not wish to see "all" safety organizations fall under one organization: "The security police and fire department should fall under one organizational command." The respondents in both career fields were more decisive in their response to this statement as compared to the previous statement. Table 3.5 indicated that 73% of the fire protection personnel disagreed with the statement while 55% of the security police disagreed with the statement. It would appear that the respondents were more receptive to the combination of several organizations such



as disaster preparedness and ground safety, but support was considerably reduced if consolidation included only the police and fire departments.

	ORGANIZATION		
	<u>Fire Protection</u>	<u>Security Police</u>	<u>Total</u>
Strongly Agree	10%	13%	12%
Agree	13%	22%	18%
Undecided	4%	10%	7%
Disagree	12%	20%	17%
Strongly Disagree	<u>61%</u> 100%	<u>35%</u> 100%	<u>46%</u> 100%
	(n=56)	(n=72)	(N=128)
Missing data			4
*The Security Police and Fire Department should fall under one organizational command.			

Table 3.5 Response to Police and Fire Department Integration.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Many municipalities have combined all of their emergency radio dispatching services into one Emergency Communications Center. This center dispatches police, fire, and ambulance, as well as a multitude of other emergency and public service resources on various radio frequencies. These Emergency Communication Centers (ECCs) are manned by trained dispatchers who handle the diversity of calls which are received in the centers. The dispatchers do not have decision-making authority. Authority remains with the ranking police officer or fire fighter on duty at that time.

One of the statements was designed to determine the respondents' reactions to an integrated fire protection/security police dispatch center. The results of that statement are listed

in Table 3.6. Neither the firemen nor the police officers were in favor of this type of arrangement. Sixty-eight percent of the firemen disagreed and 64% of the police officers disagreed.

	ORGANIZATION		
	<u>Fire Protection</u>	<u>Security Police</u>	<u>Total</u>
Strongly Agree	3%	8%	10%
Agree	14%	19%	17%
Undecided	5%	8%	7%
Disagree	13%	24%	19%
Strongly Disagree	<u>55%</u> 100%	<u>40%</u> 100%	<u>47%</u> 100%
	(n=56)	(n=72)	(N=128)
Missing data			4
*Although they would continue to use two separate radio frequencies, it would be more efficient to have one central dispatch center for security and fire.			

Table 3.6 Response to Combined Communications Facility.

#### STATEMENTS CONCERNING TRAINING

Although training was not ranked as the most important operational concern of the respondents (see Table 3.4), it nonetheless generated more comments on the returned questionnaires than any other single item. Several survey statements were concerned with training in one form or another. One item dealt with cross-training for mutual assistance, another concerned security police 'law enforcement' specialists assisting fire fighters and a third spoke of 'structural' fire fighters assisting security police. The final attitude statement concerning training measured the reaction to security police personnel carrying fire fighting gear in the trunks of their vehicles.

On the subject of cross-training, the majority of the firemen disagreed with the idea (59%), while the majority of the security police were in favor of the idea (68%). Most of the negative comments provided by the respondents, some of which can be noted in the final section of this chapter, indicated that the training for each of the two career fields was too specialized to insure that one individual was proficient in both areas. Refer to Table 3.7 for the results.

	ORGANIZATION		
	<u>Fire Protection</u>	<u>Security Police</u>	<u>Total</u>
Strongly Agree	11%	22%	17%
Agree	25%	45%	36%
Undecided	5%	7%	7%
Disagree	18%	13%	15%
Strongly Disagree	<u>41%</u>	<u>13%</u>	<u>25%</u>
	100%	100%	100%
	(n=56)	(n=71)	(N=127)
Missing Data			5
*Fire department and security police personnel should be trained to assist one another on a limited basis.			

Table 3.7 Response to Mutual Training.

Two other statements were constructed to measure the reaction to the possible alternatives of mutual cross training. One statement presented the idea of training security police personnel to assist fire fighters on a routine and when available basis. As can be seen in Table 3.8, neither group was in favor of this idea. Fifty-eight percent of the security police personnel rejected this idea and 67% of the personnel in fire protection disagreed. When proposing the opposite idea, that is, should the fire fighters be trained to assist the security police, the results were similar. Eighty-two percent of the fire fighters did not desire this training and neither did 65% of the security personnel. Refer to Table 3.9.

ORGANIZATION			
	<u>Fire Protection</u>	<u>Security Police</u>	<u>Total</u>
Strongly Agree	12%	7%	9%
Agree	19%	28%	24%
Undecided	2%	7%	5%
Disagree	18%	34%	27%
Strongly Disagree	<u>49%</u> 100%	<u>24%</u> 100%	<u>35%</u> 100%
	(n=57)	(n=74)	(N=131)
Missing data			1
*Security Police "law enforcement" personnel should be trained to assist fire fighters on a routine (and when available) status.			

Table 3.8 Security Police Trained to Assist Fire Fighters.

ORGANIZATION			
	<u>Fire Protection</u>	<u>Security Police</u>	<u>Total</u>
Strongly Agree	5%	5%	5%
Agree	9%	24%	17%
Undecided	4%	6%	5%
Disagree	21%	38%	31%
Strongly Disagree	<u>61%</u> 100%	<u>27%</u> 100%	<u>42%</u> 100%
	(n=57)	(n=74)	(N=131)
Missing Data			1
*"Structural" fire fighters should be trained to assist security police on a routine (and when available) status.			

Table 3.9 Fire Fighters Trained to Assist Security Police.

The final statement of the questionnaire suggested the idea of placing fire fighting gear in the trunks of the security police vehicles. The fire fighters were against the idea by 86% of their total and the security police personnel disagreed by 70% of their total. Please refer to Table 3.10.

ORGANIZATION			
	<u>Fire Protection</u>	<u>Security Police</u>	<u>Total</u>
Strongly Agree	7%	4%	5%
Agree	5%	16%	12%
Undecided	2%	10%	6%
Disagree	19%	33%	27%
Strongly Disagree	<u>67%</u>	<u>37%</u>	<u>50%</u>
	100%	100%	100%
	(n=57)	(n=73)	(N=130)
Missing Data			2
<p>*In many municipalities the police officers are issued fire fighting equipment/clothing which they carry in their vehicles. When fire fighting vehicles respond to the scene of a fire, these police officers utilize their equipment and assist with the fire. The Air Force Security Police should assume similar responsibilities.</p>			

Table 3.10 Response to Security Police Carrying and Utilizing Fire Fighting Gear.

#### RESPONDENT'S COMMENTS

The final item on the survey was an open-ended question soliciting any further comments from the respondent. "The goal of a closed-end question is to elicit unambiguous responses--responses for which there is no reservation in the interviewer's mind about which ...categories they fit. The goal of open-end questions is to elicit responses in depth--to get full information from the respondent, information which may combine several responses in one..." (2:266) The author received some

ambiguous responses which did not appear to fit into any particular category; however, he also received some constructive comments both positive and negative. As the reader may suspect, the majority of the respondents who offered comments, offered them to emphasize a point of disagreement. There were only a few comments which supported responses of agreement. First a few of the lighter, ambiguous comments.

"This is the dumbest idea I've heard of in years." "We get burned enough as security policemen!" "Suggesting that...(these organizations be combined)...because they are responsible for population safety is a little like saying elephants, porpoises and humans are all mammals so we can treat them all the same." [The author had no idea how to categorize this latter statement.] There were a number of constructive comments which the reader can evaluate for himself.

As previously stated, the areas of training and proficiency, by far, received the most comments and seemed to be the greatest concern to any possibility of integration. These comments were received from both the fire protection personnel and the security police personnel. The respondents who offered comments about training were mainly concerned about the level of proficiency which could be maintained and training for wartime tasking.

One security respondent was concerned about the "experience and stability" within the Air Force and felt that attempting to offer too much training to an airman would not be effective. "It is difficult to train these first term airmen with the time available to be proficient in the many police tasks required. To train them to the level of fire fighting capability to be an asset...would be difficult." A fire protection person offered the following, "It is difficult at best to train a law enforcement officer, but then to expect him to function in the role of a fire fighter. This is especially true in view of the diversified areas requiring proficiency such as hazardous materials, building construction and design, fire effects on various materials and a multitude of related subjects."

Another security police person expressed concern that he was having difficulty keeping his personnel proficient in the wartime skills of Air Base Ground Defense training. He wondered which would take precedence, wartime tasking or fire fighting training? Similarly, a fire fighter asked about precedence when his personnel were on a "standby" mission for an incoming aircraft and the police were simultaneously tasked for a security incident. He further postulated that the civilian areas where the public safety system has been employed does not have aircraft or munitions loading standby duty.

The author also received a letter from a fireman who was representing an international society for fire personnel. This man wrote in part, "It is correct that the combining of fire and police services reduces costs. This savings usually takes a while to appear because more protective equipment, more vehicles, and more training funds are required. Unfortunately, after the costs balance out, the level of service provided to the consumer is generally reduced. The system may provide slightly higher on-duty manning, but spreads it out thinly over the protected area." He also had this analogy to offer about the Public Safety Officer concept. "The long term loss of quality emergency services is not justified for the cost. It is much like the painting of fire trucks lime green...making the vehicles more visible. Well it made the trucks more visible as trucks, but not recognizable as emergency vehicles. [Therefore fire departments are returning to red trucks]. That's the problem with PSO's, they work but they don't work good enough in a critical field such as fire protection."

When addressing the total "public safety" concept, one security respondent suggested "...combining law enforcement and fire fighting and maybe disaster preparedness and EMTs [emergency medical technicians] into one squadron...and assign all aircraft and munitions security under one combat defense squadron. All this under a security police group umbrella." While a fire chief posited that "...all public service agencies [security, fire, disaster preparedness, ground safety] could be grouped in one directorate, however, under security police may not be the most desirable system. Agencies which have homogeneous enforcement/advisory responsibility such as bio-environmental, safety, fire protection should be one agency reporting directly to the wing commander. Security police and fire fighters have responsibilities that should be kept apart."

The idea of a central dispatching office brought these comments. "We need to seriously look at contracting out the law enforcement and fire alarm monitoring functions. This command could save some 38 plus slots equal to \$1.5M per year." And this, "...with the installation of a 911 emergency system and primary/secondary crash network, a high degree of central dispatch capability exists for emergency situations."

### COMMENTS SUMMARY

In summary, the comments of the respondents indicated that there were many strong concerns about the possibility of any type of integration. These concerns were not about equipment and costs, but focused on manpower and training. All expressed a sincere concern that they presently face enough difficulty maintaining the training and proficiency requirements without adding any additional training requirements.



## Chapter Four

### CONCLUSION

This concluding chapter will summarize four important areas of the research. The chapter will first cover a restatement of the purpose of the research: What the author had set out to do. Second, a summarization of what was learned. Third, the theoretical and policy implications. This is the "so what?" section. Fourth, and last, will be recommendations for any further research.

In this research, the author wanted to provide more information to those people who were interested in the public safety concept within the United States Air Force. The integration of police and fire services within the Air Force has been contemplated on more than one occasion. The purpose of this research was to interview the people who would be most affected if such integration were to occur. Organizational change can be very dysfunctional unless the people of the organization are considered when contemplating the change. The managers and commanders of these organizations possess the operational knowledge which is required in the decision making process. The previous study of this concept contained thorough research into the operational and implementation area. However, that product had not received input from the people in the field.

What was learned from this Attitude Survey? As was previously indicated, it was not the intent of the author to make a recommendation as to whether or not the United States Air Force should integrate its police and fire services. It was the intent however, to gather, qualify, and interpret certain data that may be used in any consideration of the public safety concept. In all of the statements concerning the integration of the fire protection branch and the security police, the majority of the responses were negative. There were varying degrees of negative attitude, but nonetheless negative. When the statements considered combining several offices (to include those such as disaster preparedness, ground safety and others), the respondents were more inclined to agree but, in the majority, even these responses were negative.

Some of the comments indicated there were those who believed that the public safety concept had potential on a small Air Force

installation such as an Air Force station with no flying mission. However, as a result of career progression and the high probability that a fire protection or security police individual may be stationed at several installations throughout his career, offering training as a "public safety officer" would not be cost effective.

The theoretical and policy implications indicate that any attempts to integrate these two forces will meet with considerable resistance. The initial integration would have to be very basic with little affect on organizational structure. Furthermore, if these attempts are to provide a smooth and well received transition, documentation and justification should be provided to all who are affected.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the opinion of this author that further consideration or research into the idea of a public safety system within the United States Air Force will be of little or no value. The people who would be responsible for the implementation of any integration have been interviewed and in the majority have expressed concerns which they feel will degrade the system in its present form.

For now, the idea of implementing a public safety system in the Air Force should be shelved.

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## APPENDICES

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NO  
PRINT



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE (AU)  
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, AL 36112-5542

REPLY TO  
ATTN OF

EDOWB (Maj Hoffmaster)

12 November 1985

SUBJECT

Public Safety Questionnaire

TO Questionnaire recipients

1. The idea of integrating some or all of the functions of the fire department and security police under one organizational command has been considered on several occasions. This is your opportunity to express an opinion! In 1983, a research project completed by an Air University student indicated such integration could result in a dollar savings and a more efficient use of manpower. The entire concept would be too lengthy to discuss in this letter, but we wished to get your thoughts on certain aspects of the proposal.
2. The attached survey contains questions focused on your operation. We are not asking if your office can absorb someone else's responsibilities, merely soliciting perceptions about your organization. As a manager of these resources, your opinion is probably the most important factor of any research into this subject. Your cooperation is vital to the success of this survey.
3. By returning the completed survey to this office in a timely manner, we will be able to utilize your opinion in the final analysis. The integration of some or all of these functions may very well result in a more efficient organization. We would like your opinions.

JAN C. HOFFMASTER, Maj, USAF  
Project Officer

3 Atch

1. Instructions
2. Questionnaire
3. Return Envelope

NO  
PRINT



# QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please check your present command. (Check one only.)

☐ MAC  
☐ TAC  
☐ SAC  
☐ ATC  
☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please check the box next to your grade/rank.

☐ O-5 or O-6  
☐ O-3 or O-4  
☐ E-7 - E-9  
☐ Civilian (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. To which career field are you presently attached?

☐ Fire department  
☐ Security Police  
☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4. How long have you been in the career field which you indicated in #3 above?

☐ Less than 5 years  
☐ 5 to 10 years  
☐ 10 to 15 years  
☐ 15 to 20 years  
☐ 20+

5. How many years have you been in your present position? \_\_\_\_\_

6. The following are items which have an impact upon your present operation. Please prioritize them with # 1 indicating that which is of the greatest concern.

☐ Equipment  
☐ Dollars  
☐ Manpower  
☐ Training  
☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. How many people are in your organization (not counting civilian clerical workers)? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is the present daytime population of your base? \_\_\_\_\_
9. It would be more efficient to have those organizations which are responsible for the safety of the base population fall under one organizational command.
- ☐ Strongly agree
  - ☐ Agree
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Disagree
  - ☐ Strongly disagree
10. If you agreed to # 9 above, what functional areas should be included in this organizational structure?
- ☐ Disaster Preparedness
  - ☐ Ground Safety
  - ☐ Security Police
  - ☐ Fire Department
  - ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
11. The Security Police and Fire Department should fall under one organizational command.
- ☐ Strongly agree
  - ☐ Agree
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Disagree
  - ☐ Strongly disagree
12. Although they would continue to use two separate radio frequencies, it would be more efficient to have one central dispatch center for security and fire.
- ☐ Strongly agree
  - ☐ Agree
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Disagree
  - ☐ Strongly disagree
13. If the security police and fire department personnel would come under the same organizational command, they should nonetheless maintain their separate AFSCs.
- ☐ Strongly agree
  - ☐ Agree
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Disagree
  - ☐ Strongly disagree
14. Fire department and security police personnel should be trained to assist one another on a limited basis.
- ☐ Strongly agree
  - ☐ Agree
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Disagree
  - ☐ Strongly disagree

15. Security Police 'law enforcement' personnel should be trained to assist fire fighters on a routine (and when available) status.
- ☐ Strongly agree
  - ☐ Agree
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Disagree
  - ☐ Strongly disagree
16. 'Structural' fire fighters should be trained to assist security police on a routine (and when available) status.
- ☐ Strongly agree
  - ☐ Agree
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Disagree
  - ☐ Strongly disagree
17. In many municipalities the police officers are issued fire fighting equipment/clothing which they carry in their vehicles. When fire fighting vehicles respond to a scene of a fire, these police officers utilize their equipment and assist with the fire. The Air Force Security Police should assume similar responsibilities.
- ☐ Strongly agree
  - ☐ Agree
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Disagree
  - ☐ Strongly disagree
18. Do you have any further comments or suggestions about the concept of combining one or more of these agencies?

END  
FILMED

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